

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

**Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Reception in Beverly Hills,
California**

June 10, 2022

The President. Hello, hello, hello. Thank you. Please have a seat, if you have one.

Well, thank you. Haim, thank you very, very much. And, Cheryl, I told Haim that we have something in common: We both married way above our station. *[Laughter]* And we both have incredibly bright and beautiful daughters. And, Tanya, it's good to see you. And thank you for everything.

Folks, look, Adam Schiff—you know, I hear so much about Adam. I get these phone—no, that's not a joke. I get these phone calls from Nancy Pelosi. Whenever there's anything I need, she says, "Call Adam." *[Laughter]* "Call Adam." I said, "What in the hell am I going to call Adam for?" "He can help you. He can help you." Adam, you've done an incredible job, pal. You really have. And I'm proud to be—*[inaudible]*.

And when I asked Jaime Harris *[Harrison]** to be chairman of the party, he said yes. And he hasn't spoken to me since. *[Laughter]* He said, "How the hell did you get me into this thing?" *[Laughter]* Being chairman of a political organization is the most important, least thankful job in the world. But thank you, Jaime. I appreciate what you're doing. I really do.

And, by the way, I have grown to love his home State of South Carolina, because I think I'm the only person who ever won every single solitary district and precinct in the State.

And as they say—they say in Claymont, Delaware, where we moved from, when coal got—died in Northeast Pennsylvania, and we moved from Scranton, Pennsylvania, down to Claymont, Delaware, a little steel town in the northern part of Delaware. There were jobs in those days. I was going into third grade.

The—you know, the fact of the matter was that my dad used to say that it matters. It matters. And I want to thank your senior Senator, the leader of the House, for—I said "Senator"; I meant to say "Congressman"—in South Carolina. We have an expression in Claymont, Delaware, the little town we moved to, that "you all brung me to the dance." *[Laughter]* You brung me to the dance.

Haim has laid out what I—I'm glad he did—a little bit of what I was going to talk about, about: In spite of the fact things are pretty—a lot of people are really worried because of inflation and the cost of food and other issues, the fact is that we have the fastest growing economy in the world. *[Applause]* Not—no, no, not a joke. Not a joke. And he's laid it all out.

But one of the things that I want to make clear when your friends, who are on the other team, come up to you and say about Democrats creating a deficit—it is true: We are. We have reduced the deficit by \$320 billion last year. And this year, with all that we've done to generate growth, we invite a bit—we're predicting a trillion seven hundred billion.

And the reason I bother to say that is: This idea that inflation is caused by the economic growth we created is simply not true. It's not true.

And one of the things I wanted to make clear is that there's a clear contrast between us and the other side these days. The biggest investment that we've ever made—we used to be number one in the world in infrastructure. Now we rank number 13 in the world in infrastructure.

* White House correction.

And that's why I went to Adam and the leadership in the House and Senate and passed—we passed an infrastructure bill—road, highways. But not only that—and bridges and airports—but also the whole idea of an internet that is affordable for everyone. We're going to spend over a trillion dollars—a trillion-two-hundred-billion dollars to make sure we become the leading country in the world in terms of the modernization of infrastructure.

The point I'm trying to make is that the—you know, the idea is we also have had a few other things land on our plate, like Putin. *[Laughter]* You know, the idea that we can stand by and let Vladimir Putin not only invade a country, the country of Ukraine—which, by the way, nothing like this has happened since World War II. This is an incredibly consequential initiative. Over 100,000 Russians invading a country in the middle of Europe at a time when we thought those days were over.

But this is a guy who I had been meeting with in Geneva, trying to put together around Christmastime last, and—to talk about dealing with a strategic compromise relating to nuclear weapons and space and the like. And here he goes ahead and he decides he's going to take over. He doesn't want to just invade Ukraine, he wants to obliterate the Ukrainian culture, because he believes there's no such thing as an independent Ukrainian culture.

Look what he's doing. He is not only dealing with wiping, trying to go after what's left—what was a small military to begin with in Ukraine. He's knocking out all their cultural centers: their museums, their schools, their historic landmarks. He's trying to obliterate the culture.

And the idea that we could stand by and let that happen was just not possible. Not possible. And that's why we reinforced NATO, and that's why we're giving help to Ukraine.

But the point I'm making is this: that it is—it's really consequential. And the byproduct—and I said at the time, when we decided we were going to help Ukraine—the point that I was making was that it's going to cost us too. It's going to cost the Western countries. It's going to cost NATO. It's going to cost the European countries and cost us. Because you know what was going to happen: The cost of gasoline and oil was going to go up, and the cost of food was going to go up.

The breadbasket of the world for—not a joke—has been Ukraine and Russia, creating more grain—producing more grain and corn than any countries in the world. And there's 14 million tons of grain that is really stored now in the silos in Ukraine, but there's no way to get it out. No way to get it out. The Russians will blow the ships up as they come out of the Black Sea, if they do. And we're in a situation where we're trying to figure out how to get it out through Poland and get it out through possibly even Belarus, believe it or not.

But the problem is the gauge of the railroads are different. Literally, the tracks that their trains in Ukraine work on are not as wide as the tracks that are on in Europe. So we're building temporary silos along the border so that we can transfer this grain and this material.

And we can break down the price of food if we do that. We can bring down—and we're dealing with the whole issue of, in terms of inflation—this is boring as hell, I know. *[Laughter]* But do you—but it's the reason for inflation. The only way we can reach out and try to do something is bring down the cost of food by getting this grain to market and by providing for the access to more fertilizer, which is a big deal in all these—not only our country, but around the world.

And we're trying to bring down the price of gas, keep it from going up as rapidly as it is. I was able to release a million barrels a day from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and convince our allies to come up with another 240 million barrels a day—240 million barrels, so that it kept the price from going up further.

But the point is this: We're going to live with this inflation for a while. It's going to come down gradually, but we're going to live with it for a while.

And I come from a family where, in fact, when the price of a gallon of gasoline went up, it was a discussion at the dinner table. Like most middle or lower middle class families, it made a difference. The cost of heating oil, the cost of a whole range of things.

But we—there's more than one way to deal with the impact of inflation on average families. We can lower the prices for other things they have to pay for on a monthly basis.

For example, right now you have a circumstance where if you know anybody who has stage 2 diabetes, they have to have insulin, and they have to have it every week. Well, it can cost as much as \$1,000 a month. Average price \$647, as low as \$200, depending on where you are and what insurance you have. But you know how much it costs to make? It cost to make \$10 a vial. That's what it costs. No change in the formula to make it. And so if we allow Medicare to negotiate the price, it will bring it down to \$35.

The generic point I'm making: Some of you moms, if you have young children and you work and you need childcare, it averages in this city about \$14,000 a month [year]*. Most people have no ability to pay that. But if we have a plan where you could easily afford what we're doing here to bring it down to no more than 7 percent of your disposable income, putting another 200,000 women back to work, increasing the economic growth, and not costing us anything.

My generic point is, there's more than one way to deal with this—to deal with the immediate problem. But as Adam pointed out, it gets down to we need two more Senators.

And the other point I'd make—I talk about how the Democratic Party is divided. We have 50 United States Senators, which means we have 51 "presidents." Now—[laughter]—50—but here's the deal: Forty-eight of them vote with me 100 percent of the time. There's not much division. And the others, by the way, vote with me 65 percent of the time. The other two, they disagree on some very fundamental things, slowing up what we're able to do.

But the point is this: What you're doing by contributions today are enabling us to be in a position to win the off-year election, and a lot depends on it. Because guess what? Not a joke. I don't say this to frighten anybody or concern you, but you know, the Republican—this is not your father's Republican Party. This is a—no, I really mean it.

I—you know, I've—as you can tell, that I've been around a long time. [Laughter] I was a Senator. I've dealt with a lot of conservative Republicans—men and women of principle. But this is not your father's Republican Party. This is the MAGA party. This is—although they are a minority of the Republican Party, Trump still controls the heart and soul of the Republican Party.

I have had six—and I will not—I've told people I would never say who went, and I won't—six—Republican U.S. Senators told me they know we're right. "I'd like to vote with you on A, B, C, or D, Joe, but I can't because I'll lose my primary. I'll be in real trouble."

Look what's happening, folks, out there. Look what's happening on guns now. Now, I don't—I'm a gun owner. I own two shotguns. My son Beau passed away. He had another shotgun. We used to like to skeet shoot. We weren't hunters.

But the point I'm making is that the Second Amendment is not absolute. These ideas—these AR-15s—we outlawed the—them when I was a Senator. I passed the law. I'm the guy that wrote the laws that eliminated assault weapons. And I'm the guy who wrote the law that limited the number of bullets you could have in a magazine.

* White House correction.

And when I was—everybody said, "Well, you come from a State that doesn't matter a lot." There are more gunowners in Delaware because there are duck hunters and hunters in that—in that—what they call the Eastern Shore than there are in percentage than any State—there was back then; I don't know what it is exactly now—but any State.

And I—the way to sell this—I'd walk through the fishing areas. There's a lot of lowland swamp area in the southern part of the Delmarva Peninsula. And the guys would be fishing, and I was—when I was campaigning to get this done. And they'd say, "God darn, Joe, what the hell are you doing taking my gun away?" And I said, "Let me ask you a question." I said, "How many—when you go deer hunting, how many deer are wearing Kevlar vests?" [Laughter] And they'd look at me. I'm not joking. This is what I—and they'd kind of look at me and I said, "And by the way, if you need 30, 40, 60, up to 100 rounds to fire," I said, "you're a danger to yourself, man." [Laughter] And they'd go, "Yes, well, Joe, but they say you're going to take my gun."

The point of the matter is that we passed it for 10 years, this ban. And significant violent crime and particularly—went to—mass shootings went down 70 percent.

But I could only get it passed for 10 years. It had to be reauthorized in 10 years. The Bush administration came into play. And I'm not—I don't want to pick on the Bush administration because they weren't all bad, but they didn't have the courage to try to pass it again.

And guess what? Violent shootings went up seven—seven times what they were.

We have more people—and by the way, the other piece I want to remind everybody of: It's not just these mass shootings in our schools and the like. There's a mass shooting on the streets of African American communities and minority communities every single day. Every single day. I'll say it again: Every single day, more children are killed by gunfire than any other reason. Think about that. Think about that.

The reason I bother to go through this with you is it's not just what you saw the last couple months. I met with every single solitary family member in Uvalde. I met with every single solitary family member and spent time with them up in Buffalo, New York. I saw—that little girl hugged me and—was hanging on my leg, who had the courage—the courage, at 10 years old, to take the blood off her friend—one of her closest friend's body and put it on her face to pretend she was dead. Think about that. Think about that.

And think about these guys—what they're unwilling to do. Think about—my wife is a teacher. She teaches full time still as a community college teacher. The idea we're going to provide—the way to deal with gun safety is to provide teachers with guns and classrooms?

There's a reason why the military takes so long to train somebody. It's not easy to pick up a rifle or a gun and blow somebody's brains out in front. More people get killed with their own gun in their home trying to stop a burglar than, in fact, any other cause. Think about that. Because it's hard to do. It's a hard thing to do.

You know, I was in Buffalo meeting with the families. Sat—I spent 3 hours with them. And to hear the stories—the stories about how they—what they just did and how "we just finally got a grocery store," and the community is finally coming back.

It's so damn sad.

But here's the point I'm trying to make: This is not your father's Republican Party. These guys are extreme. They're extreme. And they're extreme—you talk about *Roe v. Wade*. Even if you didn't agree with *Roe v. Wade*—it's 50 years in the making, by the way. They've been there 50 years.

And it had a rational balance to it, no matter what your background or faith was. But it gets thrown out. But here's what else gets thrown out. If that reading—if the case comes down the way it's been written—and I taught constitutional law for 14 years—if it comes out the way that it looks like—that the draft was, guess what? You're going to have a circumstance where there may—what may be in jeopardy is whether you can marry, who you can marry. Because if you say there's no right to privacy that exists in the Constitution at all, you got a very—he got a very different read.

And there used to be a case in Connecticut—*Griswold vs. Connecticut*. Up until 1974, I think it was—I think that's the year——

Audience member. Sixty-five.

The President. Sixty-five?

Audience member. Yes.

The President. Thank you. [*Laughter*]

You know what it said? It said you could not—you could not—a married couple could not use contraceptives in the privacy of their own bedroom. And guess what's happening now? If they pass this law—if the Supreme Court rules as expected, we're going to be in a situation where it becomes a crime for a woman to order across a State line a pill that would curtail pregnancy, no matter what—no matter at what stage. A crime.

And they're talking about being able to go across State lines to arrest people. They're talking about changes that are going to fundamentally—we don't know how far it's going to go. But this isn't just the issue of whether or not *Roe v. Wade* and the rationale of *Roe v. Wade* is maintained. There's so much else at stake.

The reason I bore you with this is that the idea—we have to make sure we remind people what's at stake here. This Republican Party is different than anyone you've ever dealt with, other than the previous 4 years with—with our good friend. [*Laughter*]

But here's the deal, guys: It goes well beyond that. It goes well beyond those two cases. It goes to so many other issues that are—this is a guy who says—not a joke—windmills cause cancer. This is a guy who denies that there's global warming. This is a guy whose party will—is trying—is taking on every single initiative I put forward on green energy.

And so this is, you know—let me close this way: I think it's fair to say—and the one thing even the folks in the back in the press give me credit for—is holding NATO together. Because what happened was there was a clear expectation on the part of Putin that he'd be able to break NATO.

So I've spent well over 140 calls—I've either been in, in Europe and/or had them here and/or on—on video with them, and to—but here's the deal—and thank you—to maintain the cohesion that we need to have.

But one of the things I found when I showed up at the first what they call "G-7 meeting"—the largest economies in the world—and it was back last year in—I guess it was February. And I showed up, and I said, "America is back." And some of the leaders looked at me and said, "For how long?" "For how long?" "For how long?" Because he's changed the world.

I've spent most of my time, including today and this week, with the—with the American—with the conference I have going on for the Americas, trying to convince people that, "Just hang on. We're going to be okay. We're going to—we're not going to change. We're not going to go back." But people are worried about it.

And we got to remind people in this off-year election what's at stake—what's at stake. And it's really—it's a pretty big deal what's at stake.

In addition to all that I've talked about, what they're worried about—for example, the Republicans have put out—the guy heading up the campaign committee for Republicans put out their plan, what they're for. It has three major parts.

One, 70 percent of all the people making under \$100,000 are going to have their taxes raised. Under \$100,000, nobody above. Under \$100,000. It's going to be an average increase of \$1,500 in taxes for them.

But here's the deal: They also—every 5 years, if their program becomes law—every 5 years, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are on the chopping block. They automatically go out of existence unless they affirmatively vote it back into existence. Think about that now. They go out of existence unless they're affirmatively voted back into existence.

Now, it's unlikely they'll vote them all out of existence—not let it happen. But guess what they'll do? They're going to make sure they curtail every one of those programs.

And you still have the—I call him the "gentleman Senator from the State of Wisconsin," arguing that we have to do away with the health care proposals we have. The Affordable Care Act: They tried hundreds of times to try to get rid of it; they're back at it again. We were able to lower the cost of health care for the average family by \$400 a month—a gigantic impact.

So the point we got to remind people of: There's so much at stake. So much at stake, from your basic human rights, all the way to the economic impact that will occur if we do not win this election. And if we do, we have so much opportunity.

I've never been as optimistic about America as I am today, and I really mean it. And the main reason I am is because of your generation and my daughter's generation. No, I really mean it. Because think about it: The generation between the ages of 18 and 30 is the single best educated generation in American history, the single most openminded generation, the least prejudiced generation in American history, and the generation that has volunteered more than any other generation except mine when it—back in the sixties when I was graduating in 1968. Not a joke. Not a joke. There's an enormous opportunity.

And the rest of the world is looking to us. And those of you who have—you traveled abroad, those of you have businesses abroad, those of you who have family or friends abroad, you know what I'm talking about. There really is, "What happens if the United States goes back to a Trumpian government?" It is a gigantic, gigantic setback.

And here's the last point I'll make: When I ran for this—I had no intention of running for the Presidency, as you well know, because we talked at length about it. Because I decided I was out of—I—when I left the Vice Presidency, I decided I wasn't going to run again for anything. And in large part, I must admit to you, because I lost my—part of my soul. I lost my son who was in Iraq for a year, won the Conspicuous Service Medal, the Bronze Star. He was the attorney general of the State of Delaware. He should be the one standing and talking to you, not—not me.

And I wasn't going to run again. And then what happened was—and I mean this sincerely; I want to remind you—I remember sitting before the television. I become a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. And I was teaching there, and I remember turning on the television—it was in the evening at home—watching these guys come out the woods in Charlottesville, Virginia, carrying torches. Remember? Hundreds of them carrying torches, Nazi flags, swastikas, and singing the same antisemitic bile, the same language—[inaudible]—that was sung in Europe in the early thirties. Accompanied by the Ku Klux Klan. And the head of the Ku Klux Klan saying he promised he "would not let us down."

And a young woman was killed in the process—protesting them.

And the President was asked, "What do you think, Mr. President?" And his response was—his response was—and this is—I'm not making this up. Remember it? He said, "There are good people on both sides."

That's when I decided that I had to try to think about doing this again. But here—[*applause*]*—no, no, no. But I must tell you—I must tell you, I held off because I knew how ugly it would be.*

And I have five grandchildren—I had four at the time—and a surviving son and a surviving daughter. And I knew what they would do. And so, I decided I wasn't going to do it.

We have a—we—I shouldn't be so personal with you, but we have a tradition in our family, for real, going back to my dad. Any child in the family can ask for a family meeting—not a joke—and it has to be taken seriously. And you sit down, and whatever is on that child's mind or that young person's mind gets discussed openly among the family.

I got a phone call from my eldest granddaughter, who was then a sophomore—a junior at Columbia Law School—and said, "Pop, we'd like to have a family meeting." And it was on a Wednesday she called me. And my deceased son's children live only a mile as the crow flies from my home in Delaware. Two others lived—one was still in high school in Washington and one was at the University of Pennsylvania.

And so they all showed up on Saturday. And they sat down in my library with my wife and I, and my—Naomi—named after my deceased daughter who was killed in an accident—said, "Pop, you've got to run. Daddy wants you to run." And she—and they went on to lay out why.

Because their whole life they have been either this granddaughter or daughter of a attorney general or a Vice President or a Senator or—at the time, Vice President. But they know what it's like; it's good and bad being in that spotlight. It's not all—you know, it's not all happy days for kids who are—no matter how good they are over the—if your father is a well-known—or your mother is a well-known personality.

And so they started giving me the reasons why they should run. And my youngest son—my youngest grandson at the time—I have a new one—named Hunter—Hunter Biden—he was then 13 years old. And he said, "Pop, we know it's going to be mean." And he took out his cell phone. My wife doesn't like me telling this story, but it's important. Took out his cell phone and showed me a picture—a photograph—this was on the internet—of me walking out of the church when my son's burial, with a military honor guard escorting his casket, my hand on the—on the flag-draped coffin, and my other hand on—underneath the chin of my little guy, Hunter, holding them up like just this.

And you know what it said? It said, "Biden molests another child."

Audience members. Ooh!

The President. So he said: "Pop, we know it's going to be mean. Daddy is not here, but he wants you to run."

The only reason I ran is because Donald Trump was running.

Here's the deal, guys: What you're doing here really, really matters. We cannot afford to let this MAGA Republican Party win. We can't. And I've never said that before.

Some of you have been helping me for a long time. A lot of conservative Republicans I've worked with, argued like hell with, but they were honorable people.

But this is a different—as they say in the old days, "This is a different breed of cat." And so we got to remind people what's at stake, and not by misrepresenting anything other than what is exactly true what they're saying. Because there's so much at stake. So much at stake.

And that's why—mainly, I should have just come out here and said the first thing: Thank you, thank you, thank you for what you're doing. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I really mean it.

So let's go get them. And you know what you're doing. Well, get the hell out of here, guys.

Participant. [Inaudible]

The President. Sure you can.

By the way, every time I'd walk out of my grandfather Finnegan's house in Scranton, he'd yell, "Joey, keep the faith." And my grandmother: "No, Joey spread it. Go spread the faith."

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:34 p.m. at the residence of Haim and Cheryl L. Saban. In his remarks, he referred to Tiffany Lenhart and Heidi N. Lenhart, daughters of Mrs. Saban, and Tanya Saban, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Saban; Reps. Adam B. Schiff and James E. Clyburn; Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi; Jaime R. Harrison, chairman, Democratic National Committee; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Sens. Joseph A. Manchin III, Krysten L. Sinema, and Richard L. Scott, in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee; Sen. Ronald H. Johnson; Miah Cerrillo, a fourth-grade student who survived the shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, TX, on May 24; and former President George W. Bush. He also referred to his children, R. Hunter and Ashley Biden; and his grandchildren R. Hunter Biden II, and Natalie, Finnegan, Naomi, and Roberta "Maisy" Biden. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 11.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Democratic National Committee reception in Beverly Hills, CA.

Locations: Los Angeles, CA.

Names: Biden, Ashley; Biden, Finnegan J.; Biden, Jill T.; Biden, Naomi K.; Biden, Natalie P.; Biden, R. Hunter; Biden, R. Hunter, II; Biden, Roberta M. "Maisy"; Bush, George W.; Cerrillo, Miah; Clyburn, James E.; Harrison, Jaime R.; Johnson, Ronald H.; Lenhart, Heidi N.; Manchin, Joseph A., III; Pelosi, Nancy; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Saban, Cheryl L.; Saban, Haim; Saban, Tanya; Schiff, Adam B.; Scott, Richard L.; Sinema, Kyrsten L.; Trump, Donald J.

Subjects: Agriculture : Domestic production, strengthening efforts; Agriculture : Food markets and prices; Agriculture : Food shortages due to conflict in Ukraine, mitigation efforts; Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; California : Democratic Party events; California : President's visit; Children and youth : Childcare, affordability and costs; Civil rights : Firearm rights; Civil rights : Privacy; Commerce, international : Group of Seven (G-7) nations; Communications : Broadband and wireless technologies; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Democratic Party : Democratic National Committee; Economy, national : Inflation; Elections : 2022 congressional elections; Energy : Gasoline, oil, and natural gas costs; Energy, Department of : Strategic Petroleum Reserve; Health and medical care : Abortion; Health and medical care : Contraception and family planning; Health and medical care : Health insurance exchanges; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Health and medical care : Prescription drugs, affordability and costs; Infrastructure, national improvement efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Gun control; Law enforcement and crime : Gun violence, prevention efforts; New York : Buffalo :: Shooting; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Republican Party : National Republican Senatorial Committee; Russia : President; Russia : U.S. elections, interference; Social Security

and retirement : Social Security program; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Texas : Uvalde ::
Shooting; Ukraine : Russian airstrikes and invasion; Ukraine : U.S. assistance.

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